

Kindly amend the application as follows:

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the fourth paragraph on page 5 of the specification with the following replacement paragraph:*

B¹
Figure 4 shows the amino acid sequence (SEQ ID NO: 2) of the novel rice gene which controls a physiological reaction system induced by brassinosteroid hormone, together with characteristic sequences found therein (where nuclear localization signals and an ATP/GTP binding motif can be observed).

Please replace the second paragraph on page 12 of the specification with the following replacement paragraph:

(Example 5: Structural analysis of the causative gene)

B₂
Using the sequence obtained according to Example 2 as a probe, the corresponding cDNA and genomic clone were obtained from a cDNA library and a genomic library. Their structures are shown in SEQ ID Nos: 1 and 3. It was learned that this gene includes 6 exons and 5 introns, encoding 1057 amino acids, and that Tos17 had been inserted at the 4th and 5th exons in two mutants, respectively.

* Applicants enclose herewith marked up copy of these specification paragraphs and the claims indicating the amendments in this response.

B2
cont.

Moreover, motif search results suggested the presence of nuclear localization signal 1 (amino acid residues 329-367 of SEQ ID NO: 2, Robbins & Dingwall consensus sequence; a search result by PSORT program) and nuclear localization signal 2 (amino acid residues 457-460, 595-600 of SEQ ID NO: 2, 4 amino acid nuclear localization pattern signal; a search result by PSORT program) as well as the presence of an ATP/GTP binding domain (amino acid residues 526-533 of SEQ ID NO: 2; a search result by a motif search service on Genomenet). Thus, the possibility of this gene being involved in signal transduction was suggested (Figure 4).

IN THE CLAIMS

Please replace claims 1-3 with rewritten claims 1-3 as follows:

Sub C1

1. (Amended) An isolated polynucleotide encoding a plant polypeptide which controls a signal transduction system for brassinosteroid hormone, the polynucleotide encoding an amino acid sequence from Met at position 1 to Arg at position 1057 of SEQ ID NO: 2 in the SEQUENCE LISTING, including any polynucleotide encoding an amino acid sequence with at least 80% homology to SEQ ID NO: 2.

D3

2. (Amended) The isolated polynucleotide according to claim 1 derived from rice.